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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - IRAQ - INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS

PARIS - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

IRAQ - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

THE STATE OF FRANCE'S ECONOMY AND ECONOMIC MINISTER THIERRY BRETON'S DIAGNOSTIC AND PROPOSALS ARE TODAY'S MAJOR FRONT-PAGE AND EDITORIAL STORIES. EDITORIALISTS AGREE THAT HIS ANALYSIS IS LUCID BUT THEY FAULT HIS LACK OF PRACTICAL PROPOSALS TO DEAL WITH UNEMPLOYMENT.

ALTHOUGH FEW OUTLETS REPORT ON THE U.S.-EU CONFERENCE ON IRAQ IN BRUSSELS, (LA CROIX AND LE FIGARO), LE FIGARO RUNS AN ENTIRE PAGE ON THE CONFERENCE, LEADING WITH THE STORY, "WASHINGTON DRUMS UP AID FOR IRAQ." ANOTHER REPORT DESCRIBES THE "LIMITATIONS" OF U.S. STRATEGY IN IRAQ, WHILE STILL ANOTHER POINTS TO THE FACT THAT "INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS (ON IRAQ) HAS BECOME CRUCIAL FOR PRESIDENT BUSH." (SEE PART C) LA CROIX'S FACTUAL REPORTING EMPHASIZES THAT "THE CONFERENCE IS NOT A DONORS' CONFERENCE BUT A POLITICAL CONFERENCE."

IN AN OP-ED IN LE MONDE TITLED "EUROPE: TIME FOR TRUTH," FM DOUSTE-BLAZY WRITES: "IT IS TIME TO DEFINE EUROPE'S PLACE IN THE WORLD. IRAQ HAS SHOWN BY DEFAULT THAT EUROPE MUST UNITE IN ORDER TO REAFFIRM A DIPLOMACY AND DEFENSE THAT WILL ALLOW IT TO HOLD ITS RANK IN THE WORLD AND TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE, LOUD AND AUTONOMOUS. LET US GIVE OURSELVES THE MEANS FOR A REAL FOREIGN POLICY AS WE DID FOR OUR DEFENSE."

LE FIGARO CARRIES AN OP-ED BY REED BRODY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH TITLED: "CLOSE GUANTANAMO. AND OTHER SECRET PRISONS." "EVEN A COUNTRY AS BENT ON UNILATERALISM AS THE U.S. CANNOT IGNORE WHAT THE REST OF THE WORLD THINKS; AND GUANTANAMO IS DEFINITELY AN ISSUE THAT UNITES THE REST OF THE WORLD."

LE FIGARO ALSO CARRIES AN OP-ED PENNED BY KOFI ANNAN TITLED: "THE UN IN IRAQ: LOTS OF WORK AND LITTLE NOISE."

UN REFORMS, INCLUDING THE PLAN TO WIDEN THE UNSC, ARE A MAJOR STORY IN LE MONDE. ONE REPORT GIVES THE FRENCH POSITION: "FRENCH LEADERS BELIEVE THAT FOR THE WORLD TO BE EQUITABLY REPRESENTED, THE UNSC MUST BE 'SUBSTANTIALLY' OPEN TO OTHERS, AND NOT IN THE 'VERY LIMITATIVE' MANNER PROPOSED BY THE U.S." A SEPARATE REPORT IS TITLED "AND STILL NO U.S. AMBASSADOR FOR THE UN."

SECRETARY RICE'S TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST ELICITS SCANT

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REPORTING, WITH LA CROIX THE ONLY OUTLET CARRYING A REPORT TITLED: "CONDOLEZZZA RICE GIVES A LESSON IN DEMOCRACY TO SAUDI ARABIA," WHILE THE ABBAS-SHARON SUMMIT IS FACTUALLY COVERED. FROM HISTORIC, YESTERDAY'S HEADLINE, THE SUMMIT HAS NOW BECOME "DISAPPOINTING." FRANCE SOIR HEADLINES: "A HISTORIC BUT DISAPPOINTING MEETING," WHILE LE FIGARO TITLES "A SUMMIT BEARING NO FRUIT."

UKRAINE'S PRESIDENT YUSHENKO IS IN PARIS FOR A ONE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT, ELICITING A MOSTLY POSITIVE ARTICLE IN LIBERATION ABOUT THE LONG-TIME US SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY THAT LEAD TO THE ORANGE REVOLUTION. EUROPE'S RECENT SIMILAR ENGAGEMENT LEADS LIBERATION TO COMMENT: "THE OLD CONTINENT CAN ALSO HELP DEMOCRATIZATION BUT WITHOUT THE MESSIANIC VISION OF THE AMERICANS, AND ALSO WITHOUT THEIR EFFICIENCY."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

IRAQ - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS

"WASHINGTON DRUMS UP AID FOR IRAQ"
ALEXANDRINE BOUILHET IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (06/22):
"SPONSORED BY THE U.S., THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON IRAQ HELD IN THE HEART OF 'OLD EUROPE' AIMS TO CELEBRATE A NEW-FOUND UNITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. ON THE EUROPEAN SIDE, THIS PLUNGE INTO THE IRAQI HELL HAS THE MERIT OF

DOWNSIZING THE PRESENT EUROPEAN CRISIS. FOR A DAY, EUROPE WILL BE BACK IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. FOR THE AMERICANS, THE CO-SPONSORSHIP OF THE CONFERENCE BY THE U.S. AND EUROPE IS AN EXTRAORDINARY PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN ORCHESTRATED BY PRESIDENT BUSH WITH MASTERY DURING HIS FORMER TRIP TO BRUSSELS. SECRETARY RICE WILL BE THE STAR, ALONG WITH KOFI ANNAN. BUT THE CONFERENCE IS NOT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR IRAQ, BUT RATHER TO PUT FORWARD THE IRAQI TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT WHILE ERASING THE IMAGE OF THE U.S., THE OCCUPIER WHO WENT TO WAR AGAINST IRAQ WITHOUT THE UN'S GO AHEAD. THE FRENCH, WHO LED THE SIDE OF PEACE, ARE GRASPING THE LINES WHICH THE AMERICANS ARE THROWING BY WAY OF THE IRAQIS. EUROPE'S PRAGMATIC APPROACH HAS ALLOWED THE DIALOGUE WITH WASHINGTON, WHICH IS CALLING FOR A 'STRONG EUROPE,' TO RESUME."

"THE LIMITATIONS OF U.S. STRATEGY"

THIERRY OBERLE IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (06/22): "HAIFA STREET IN BAGHDAD HAS BEEN FREED OF ITS GUERRILLA SNIPERS. BUT THIS SPECTACULAR SUCCESS HAS ITS LIMITATIONS. WHILE THE U.S. HAS BEEN ABLE TO INFILTRATE HEAVY BLOWS ON THE GUERRILLA FIGHTERS, ITS STRATEGY TO COUNTER THE INSURRECTION IS FAR FROM HAVING REACHED ITS OBJECTIVES. ALTHOUGH HIGHLY SYMBOLIC, HAIFA STREET'S RETURN TO NORMAL CANNOT HIDE THE FACT THAT BOMBS GO OFF EVERYDAY IN BAGHDAD. IT IS DIFFICULT TO SPEAK ABOUT PROGRESS WHEN THE NUMBERS OF IRAQIS DYING HAVE BEEN INCREASING SINCE THE ELECTIONS. THE U.S. REGULARLY ACCUSES SYRIA OF FACILITATING THE INFILTRATION OF INSURGENTS. TWO YEARS AFTER IT BEGAN, THE GUERRILLA FIGHT RETAINS ALL OF ITS STRENGTH AS WELL AS THE SUPPORT AND AID OF THE COUNTRY'S SUNNIS, AND ACCORDING TO A BOSTON GLOBE STUDY, MORE THAN JUST THE SUNNIS."

"BUSH WANTS TO TAKE THE LEAD AGAIN"

PHILIPPE GELIE IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (06/22): "THE PRESENCE OF 80 NATIONS AT THE BEDSIDE OF BAGHDAD OFFERS THE IMAGE WHICH PRESIDENT BUSH NEEDS AT THIS STAGE OF HIS IRAQI ADVENTURE. THE PRESIDENT HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE THE LEAD AGAIN ON A WAR THAT REFUSES TO BE FORGOTTEN. THE CONFERENCE'S AGENDA NEEDS AN INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS WHICH PRESIDENT BUSH CONSIDERS CRUCIAL AT THIS POINT IN TIME. OVERTAKEN BY DOUBT, PRESIDENT BUSH CONTINUES TO ASSERT THAT 'PROGRESS IS BEING MADE.' EVEN IF HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGES 'HOW DANGEROUS IT IS IN IRAQ.' THIS TWO-SIDED MESSAGE IS BY WAY OF CONTRADICTING THOSE WHO ACCUSE THE WHITE HOUSE OF BEING 'DISCONNECTED' FROM REALITY." WOLFF